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ANTICLERICALISM IN FRANCE

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The present anticlerical movement in France attracts the attention of all peoples. An inquiry into its causes and its real nature may be expedient for scholars and other students of religious matters.

Let us observe, first, that anticlericalism, although seldom so intense as now, is not a new thing in that country. France is a Catholic country, but was never for a long time clerical. A glance at its religious history in modern times will throw some light upon its religious temper.

Protestantism, supported by a part of the nobility and of the bourgeoisie, was definitively mastered in France only in the seventeenth century after long wars and odious persecutions. The French kings identified national unity with religious unity; while opposing Protestantism, they upheld very strongly, against the claims of the Roman court, the rights of the Gallican church, that is, a national Catholic church agreeing with the universal Catholic church represented by Rome in religious faith and ecclesiastical organization, but not less united to the French royalty, which appointed the ecclesiastical dignitaries and did not allow the directions of the popes to be published and carried out in France without the special authorization of the government. The civil power maintained firmly its own

overlordship and independence with regard to Rome in all that concerned the ecclesiastical administration. The church was considered as one of the organs of the national life; the clergy formed with the nobility and the third estate the three classes of the nation. Such was the ancient French tradition by which Protestantism was crushed.

During the eighteenth century the Gallican church, deprived of any religious competition, bribed by a worldly spirit, lost all spiritual energy. The philosophy of the age, either rationalist or sensualist, but always adverse to any Catholic faith, swallowed the higher classes of the nation, and when the great Revolution of 1789 broke out, the power of the church among the leading bodies had quite faded away. Most even of the high prelates, quite like the nobles, had been overtaken by the spirit of the age. In an admirable impulse of social idealism, the two classes of the clergy and the nobility gave up spontaneously their privileges on the historic night of August 4, 1789. The clergymen ever since have been citizens like all others.

One knows how rapidly the great drama of the Revolution evolved. In a few years the whole of the ancient political and social organization of France was swept away. On April 9, 1790, the estates of the church were seized by the nation, as a consequence of the suppression of the privileged class of the clergy. The nation, on the other hand, took charge of providing for public worship and the support of the priests. The high prelates lost very much by that new régime; but the humble country vicars had no reason to complain. We observe that the Revolution, by establishing a budget of public worship, confirmed and strengthened the traditional French principle of a church subordinated to the civil power. Somewhat later (July, 1790), this was carried farther when a civil constitution of the priesthood was introduced, and it was enacted that bishops and priests must be elected by popular vote, and still farther when it was enacted that all priests must take the oath of fidelity to the national institutions (December, 1790).

The Gallican spirit, however, was too weak among the priesthood to sustain so radical a reform. The majority of the priests, following the pope, protested against those new conditions, and the leaders of the Revolution soon experienced another truth, which also prevails in all this history, that in the Catholic church it is impossible to do

anything without the episcopal power, which itself in the last resort depends on a foreign authority, the pope. In that time of revolutionary exasperation the result was not long in coming. The budget of public worship and the civil constitution of the priesthood were suppressed, and a first attempt to separate the church and state was made. But it did not last long. In July, 1801, Napoleon Bonaparte, first consul of the French Republic, signed with Pope Pius VII a *concordat*, which has ruled the relations between church and state in France till now.

Bonaparte, spurning the civil constitution of the priesthood, took up again the tradition of ancient French royalty by subordinating the church government to the sovereignty of the state. The head of the state retains the right of appointing the bishops, who have to obtain for themselves from the pope their canonical institution. The bishop appoints the curates and vicars, but has to obtain in each case the consent of the head of the state. No other church or Catholic institution will be admitted into France than that which is authorized by the government. The state grants endowments for the bishops, the curates, and a definite number of vicars, and leaves the churches to provide for as many more as may be wanted. The pope, on the other hand, renounced his claim to the former estates of the French clergy, which had been seized by the nation in 1790 and sold to individuals privately.

Bonaparte's purpose in restoring the union between the state and the churches (somewhat later he granted a similar régime to the Protestant churches) was merely political. He could not manage a church whose bishops and priests were chosen by popular vote; he wanted a strongly disciplined church, "marching like a regiment." He wanted to appoint the bishops himself; through the medium of the bishops he would control the priests; and, if the pope dared to resist his will, he knew how to constrain him. Hence the lower priesthood was wholly betrayed to the irresponsible power of the bishop; the security of the canonical jurisdiction of the ancient Gallican church was not maintained. The duty of training the future clergy-men was left to the bishops alone; no university degrees were required; and so the Concordat bred a priesthood without any spiritual independence, without any higher modern culture, fated to clericalism and Roman servitude.

The Concordat, however, was generally welcomed by the nation. After the passionate struggles of the Revolution there was a great desire for religious peace, and the authority of Bonaparte was just then fascinating. When the old royalty was restored in France after Waterloo, the pope indeed tried to extort from Louis XVIII another concordat, more favorable to the church; but the old tradition of the French monarchy prevailed over the clerical and reacting tendencies of the restoration. The bourgeoisie was still Voltairian and anticlerical. And when in 1829 and 1830 the government attempted to carry some bills which were too much on the side of the church, a new revolution broke out, and the monarchy of Louis Philippe of Orleans was substituted for that of the Bourbons. But the Concordat was kept up; nobody thought of repeating the experience of the great revolution. The new government, however, pursued a less clerical policy.

The republic of 1848, which came after the monarchy of Louis Philippe, although not guided by Catholic principles, was not hostile to the priesthood. There was then blowing across the Roman church a wind of liberalism, which seemed to be the harbinger of a new age. The French republic sent an army to Rome for restoring the temporal power of the pope, and in France the priests were consecrating the trees of liberty, which the villagers planted in the parishes. This ingenuous confidence in the liberalism of the Roman church was not rewarded. Three years later they were singing the *Te Deum* in all the churches in honor of Napoleon III, who had destroyed the republic for his own benefit, breaking the oath of fidelity to the constitution which he had sworn. And during those three years the politicians of the clerical party had time enough to carry a bill (called the "Falloux law"), which, under pretense of securing the freedom of education, granted to the Catholic church easier means than ever before for strengthening its influence in the public schools.

Such an experience was peremptory for the few strong-minded men who remained faithful to the republican ideal. Ever since then they have known that a liberal democracy cannot rely on the Catholic church. Anticlericalism became one of the essential clauses of their program. Napoleon III was obliged by the fatality of his unlawful accession to have a regard for the clergy, but, according to his usual seesaw policy, he withdrew often on one side what he was granting

on the other. Thus he maintained obstinately the temporal power of the pope in Rome, after having supported Cavour against the papal party in the foundation of united Italy, and lost all the benefit of an Italian alliance. He himself would have been inclined to an ecclesiastical policy like that of the first Napoleon, but those about him, especially the Empress Eugénie, who was of Spanish descent, were passionately clerical. She was responsible for the war with Protestant Prussia. Everyone knows what a terrible disaster for France this war was.

The French nation, however, beaten, but not despairing, did not yet realize how much harm the clerical policy had brought about. After such a terrible war, and after the civil war of the Commune, people wanted before all to restore order. As generally after great trials, there was a revival of religious fervor. The occasion of renewing its spiritual authority was unique for the Catholic church. But what did the superiors of the church do in such a moment? They committed the awful blunder of encouraging openly the restoration of monarchy and joining intimately the cause of religion with that of political reaction. Now the monarchy was not popular, because there was no popular pretender. There were at least three, each as insignificant as the others: The Duke of Chambord, inheritor of the Bourbons; the Duke of Paris, inheritor of Louis Philippe; and the son of Napoleon III, or any other prince of the same family. The three monarchical parties were hunting after the co-operation of the Catholic church; so they agreed on but one point, clericalism. The republicans, naturally, who were already anticlerical under Napoleon III, were induced to emphasize their disposition, inasmuch as in all political elections they encountered always the power of the Catholic church and the passionate opposition of the priests who used even the confessional to defeat them. Hence Gambetta could proclaim the watchword of the republicans: "*Le cléricalisme, voilà l'ennemi*;" "Clericalism, that is the enemy."

Leo XIII, less extreme and much more shrewd than Pius IX, saw the mistake, but it was too late. He used all his power in the second half of his pontificate to reconcile the French priesthood with the republican democracy, but he did not succeed immediately. The French prelates were too much engaged in the reaction to be able to

follow his advice. They were afraid to disaffect the bourgeoisie and the nobility, that is, those who paid much money. We must notice, indeed, that the same rich bourgeoisie, whom we saw still being Voltairian in the time of Louis Philippe, had become clerical under Napoleon III, partly by the influence of the education regulated by the above-named Falloux law, partly because those wealthy gentlemen were frightened by what might come out of the democracy in an economic respect. Now, the clerical church more than ever wanted money to uphold the struggle against the democracy, and the pope, bereft of his states, wanted more than ever the immense subsidies which French Catholics contribute to the Peter's pence. In time, however, the pope was listened to. In the last years the clerical party reconciled itself to the republican form of government, but it repels still with all its power most of the reforms of the republican program, without which the republic would be but an empty name.

The most important of those reforms concerns popular education. After the war of 1870 the enlightened patriots acknowledged that two things were essential for raising up the nation again: the reorganization of the army and the creation of a complete popular training. Another watchword of the time was: "The real vanquisher at Sadowa and at Sedan was the Prussian schoolmaster." And, with an admirable energy after such a heavy defeat, the French nation made military service obligatory for all citizens, and primary instruction free of cost and obligatory for all children. But as that instruction was obligatory, it ought also to be unconfessional, and the numerous public schools whose masters were friars or nuns of monastic congregations especially devoted to teaching, ought to be provided with lay teachers. And, as the Catholics, at least where they are the majority, do not permit a religious education other than Catholic to be given in the school, the only solution was to hand over religious instruction to the different churches, and to take up in the school moral training and some elementary philosophical notions about God and about physical and moral laws.

This is what the clericals denounce as "schools without God." In order to lessen the influence of these national public schools, they have created throughout the whole country thousands of free schools, generally committed to friars and sisters, and all possible local influ-

ences were used to compel peasants and laborers to send their children to the Catholic schools. In many parishes the children of the lay public school were denied admittance to the holy sacrament; the landlord gave alms only to poor people whose children frequented the Catholic school, or dealt only with shopkeepers who granted a subsidy to that school. Elsewhere rich manufacturers established clerical schools and used all their power to withdraw the children of their workmen from the public school.

People should realize how much resentment and disgust such practices inspire, to be able to understand the passionate hostility of so many patriots against clericalism. Not only in the elections for Parliament, for the departmental councils, and for the common councils, but even in social life and family life, the Catholic church is constantly using its religious authority against the democratic tendencies of the majority in the nation. The result is that the national public school becomes more and more the seat of opposition to the church, and that, in some places, it is even becoming a seat of unbelief; for most of the schoolmasters do not know any other religion than Catholicism.

This antagonism between school and church, or between the lay and the clerical school, seems very alarming to all thoughtful republicans in France. There are really two opposite nations trained against each other. Do not forget that the present clerical Catholicism is no more the Gallican religion of Bossuet and of the great prelates of the seventeenth century. It is a religion deformed by the influence of the Jesuits, the Catholicism of the Syllabus, of papal infallibility, of the worship of the Sacred Heart, of pilgrimages to Lourdes, and of offerings to St. Anthony of Padua in order to recover lost articles. It is saturated with all kinds of superstitions which overwhelm the religious highmindedness which an unbiased historian cannot but acknowledge in the Catholic church of the seventeenth century. It is really not possible to teach such a religion in a modern school. But, excited by the opposition of this adulterated religion, the public school allows itself to be more and more influenced by the spirit of the positivist philosophy, so productive in scientific matters, but so insufficient for the moral training of youth and to assume an antireligious character. And as men want a moral ideal,

we may observe that this school without religion and hostile to the church is more and more open to the spirit of socialism, where there is at least an ideal of human solidarity.

The clerical party, while striving since 1870 by its primary schools to conquer the mass of the people, endeavors by its colleges and higher schools, with much more success, to form a social staff of clerical military officers, magistrates, and engineers. The army has been especially cared for. We could measure the result of this special training in the Dreyfus case. Antisemitism, one of the finest products of the clerical spirit, was so prevalent in some garrisons, that Jewish officers were left in social isolation by their colleagues, and that even Protestant officers were not liked. In order to secure promotion, officers had to go to mass. A pupil of a clerical college, when leaving the military school, was carefully watched over in his career; the clergy insured him powerful protectors; they helped him to a rich marriage. He was enlisted in the sacred cohort of the defenders of the good cause, who supported each other to the exclusion of everyone else.

The sinews of this war are supplied by the rich middle-class business men, and the spiritual forces by the monastic congregations. The extension of those congregations since 1870 is one of the most curious features of the time. Never have friars and nuns been so numerous in France, and never was their estate so important. Even the secular priesthood suffered from this overflowing of the monastic clergy: they founded and managed schools, charity works, orphans' institutes, refuges, hospitals, newspapers for the Catholic propaganda, and everywhere, with that peculiar double character which is so notorious in all clerical enterprises, being on one side inspired by a human and really Christian ideal, and on the other side managing all things much more for the benefit of the church than for the proper good of the unfortunates themselves. So, for instance, a great number of young girls are taken by them in orphans' institutes, and for the poor children this seems to be a great blessing; but they are compelled to work beyond all measure; very little care is taken of their instruction; they are taught only some special kind of sewing, and do not receive a complete preparation. This is not for the good of the girls, but it is profitable for the institute to have at work several

specialized needlewomen, who rapidly become very clever in their business and supplement one another in a common work. The linen articles and the embroidery, which are sold so cheap in the large shops of Paris, are often sewed in these institutes. The working-men and working-women complain bitterly that their salaries are depreciated by such competition. Other congregations produce liquors, remedies, and preserves.

These are the religious, moral, political, social, and economic causes of anticlericalism in France. The most important of them is the antagonism between the public school and the church. This state of things has seemed dangerous enough to induce steady-minded men like Waldeck-Rousseau to move some measures for preventing France from being put under the guardianship of the Roman church. Most of the congregations which were at work in the schools or elsewhere were deprived of legal rights. The Concordat does not mention monastic orders. According to the traditional principles of the French law, no monastic congregation has a legal existence before being authorized by the government. At present there are but very few legally authorized congregations.

Waldeck-Rousseau, intending to gratify at last the French democracy with a liberal law on the right of association, understood that in an almost entirely Catholic country like France such a law was possible only if it applied special regulations to the monastic congregations. An association whose members give up once for all their individual liberty, all kinds of family life, all ownership of property—an association which constitutes a real militia whose leader is generally a foreigner—such an institution is not, indeed, an association of the same kind as the other ones, and requires special regulations. In the bill which was voted by Parliament a distinction was made between three kinds of congregations: those devoted to teaching, to works of charity, and to the contemplative life. The purpose was to enable the government to dissolve the teaching congregations which might seem dangerous, and to leave the others standing.

The clerical party objected strenuously to that law. At the following general elections the priests and the monks had recourse

more than ever to all means against its promoters. They were unsuccessful. In the present Parliament there is a radical majority. No wonder that its members are ill-disposed toward those who have withstood them so desperately. From the very outset the late prime minister, Combes, proclaimed that he was determined to refuse to all teaching monastic congregations the legal authorization required by the new law. So the Catholics are still entitled to support their own private schools, but they are obliged to appoint masters who do not belong to any congregation.

Neither M. Combes nor the majority in Parliament thought at first of breaking off the secular bonds between state and church. But it happened that Leo XIII died, and that his successor, Pius X, politically not so well gifted, allowed his secretary of the state, the Spanish cardinal Merry del Val, a fervent clerical prelate, to commit several diplomatic blunders. The Roman court used wrongly the word *nominavit*, instead of *nobis nominavit*, in the briefs of canonical institution of the new French bishops, so as to change the right of nomination granted to the French government by the Concordat into a mere right of presentation,¹ and when the government protested, the papal secretary declined a long time to restore the right term. The pope refused to approve the bishops chosen by the government, because they seemed to be too liberal. The Roman court wrote a sharp protest, which seemed offensive to the French nation, when M. Loubet, president of the republic, returned the visit of the king of Italy without calling upon the pope, although he could not do otherwise, because the pope does not allow the head of a Catholic nation to pay him a visit in Rome, if he does not call upon him before seeing the king; this is to prove that the highest authority in Rome is the pope, and not the king. If M. Loubet had done so, the king of Italy would not have received his visit, and the relations between France and Italy would have been imperiled.

In another time those occurrences would not have brought about serious consequences. But in such a frame of mind as reigned in France they were like sparks, and set all in a blaze. The most

¹ This is a fine example of the cunning papal diplomacy. The little word *nobis* seems harmless. But *nobis nominavit* means, "has named to us," i. e., has mentioned to us the name, while *nominavit* means, "has named," i. e., has appointed.

passionate members of Parliament lost no time and introduced a bill to make once for all an end to all the contests with the Roman power by repealing the Concordat, suppressing the budget of public worship, and separating completely the church and the state. This provision, indeed, had been for a long time on the political program of the Radical party, but it seemed impracticable, because inconsistent with the peculiar traditions of the French people, and even its promoters adjourned its realization to a future time. By the pressure of the above-mentioned events, an overwhelming tide of public opinion was formed in favor of the separation. The bill, modified in a more liberal spirit by the committee and by the new ministry of M. Rouvier, has been brilliantly debated in Parliament, and passed with a majority of more than a hundred votes.

At first sight there seems to be much levity and inconsiderate passion in such overhastiness. But for those who take care to inquire into the history of France since the Revolution, the actual anticlerical movement appears as the final act of a long evolution. They must acknowledge that the present anticlericalism has deep and ancient roots in the country, and that the events of last year have but hastened a crisis in which the struggle between school and church, between the republican democracy and the reactionary priesthood is ending.

Now the bill has to be debated in the Senate. There is no doubt, however, but that the Senate will confirm the vote of the Chamber of Deputies. Another question is whether the reform will be welcomed by the people; it is much to be feared that the countless contests to be caused by the enforcement of it will provoke a reaction. Only one thing is sure; that is, that the conflict between clericalism and the radical or socialist democracy will not be settled by the separation.

It is not easy to realize these matters in another country, where the churches have ever had an existence independent of the state, and where such a separation is in keeping with the habits of the people. But it is quite different in a country like France, where church and state have always been united. We have shown what the tradition in France is; the old Gallican spirit still prevails among part of the people, if not among the priesthood. The great bulk of the nation does not support the Roman power in its meddling with French affairs; the

people require the priest to remain in the church, to bow down to the civil law, and not to interfere with politics. They do not conceive that there may be a great variety of Christian churches, or different denominations; hence they do not easily understand Protestantism. From their age-long Catholic education they have preserved the conviction that there is but one real Christian church, and that there cannot be another one. When they leave the Catholic church, they go straight to free thought and do not stop at the middle station of Protestantism. This is what happens among a part of the industrial workmen, who are generally inclined to socialism, and also among a part of the intellectual class. But everywhere else, among the peasants, who still form the largest class in France, and among the middle classes, the ceremonies and practices of the Catholic church are still required, even when there is not much real faith. All the children are christened, catechized, and admitted to the holy communion, even those who have no intention at all of taking the sacrament after their confirmation. Although the only legal marriage is the civil one, they want to be married in the church also, and when they are dying they want at their death a burial service in the church. All these ceremonies are, if I may so say, a part of the traditional life-scenery.

But though they are enamored of all these ceremonies, they do not at all like to pay for them more than before. Till now, except during a few years of the Revolution, the state has always provided them with a priest. They had, indeed, to pay for the ceremonies, but not for the priest. Now they will have to pay for both. In many parishes there will be no sufficient resources: it is not certain that the Catholic church, which condemns the system of the separation, will give to the poor parishes the surplus of the rich ones, instead of leaving them for a time without church service, in order to provoke a reaction against the promoters of the separation bill. It seems very probable that there will be for that reason a falling off among the radical constituents.

Another kind of difficulty will be the assignation of the church properties. The Catholic church maintains that the budget of public worship is not a gratuity from the state, but a debt, the annuity of the church property, which was secularized in 1790. This claim seems

not to be founded in fact. The Concordat, which governs the re-establishment of the union between church and state, allows of nothing like this; the pope leaves it wholly to the generosity of the first consul, Napoleon Bonaparte, to provide for the appointment of the priests. The republican doctrine since 1789, together with the Gallican tradition, maintains that the estates of the clergy before 1790 belonged to one of the three orders of the nation, and that they were to return to the nation itself when the orders of the nation were suppressed. As the state still considered religious worship as a public service, it had to provide for it. But there will no longer be any duty of this kind for the state, when the religious worship ceases to be considered as a public service and becomes an object of private care. It is easy to understand how bitter will be the quarrel about these questions, as they will be raised in nearly every parish.

To whom belong the churches themselves, the buildings devoted to public worship? According to the traditional Gallican principles, they are public buildings devoted by the state to a public service, and thus belonging to the state. But since the Concordat a great many churches have been built by the subsidies of the local congregations for the use of public worship. Do they also belong to the state? Till now this has been the official doctrine. When the state, the department, the city, or the village has paid but one little subsidy, it is considered the legal owner, but for a definite use. Such are the principles; but there are no elaborated laws on the matter, because the question did not practically arise as long as religious service was a public charge. The state could be considered as legal owner, because the service of the church was an office of the state.

The bill which has been voted by the Chamber of Deputies is inspired by a liberal spirit. The church buildings are considered as the property of the state or the commune, but they are left for use without any rent, to the congregations which will be formed after the separation. But the bishop's palaces and the vicarages will be left gratuitously to their occupants only for a few years; afterward the state or the commune may make use of them as it likes.

The bill establishes rules for the forming of associations of private worship (*associations cultuelles*). They ought to be formed according to the general principles of organization of the denomination to

which they belong; i. e., the Catholic associations will have to be established with the consent of the bishop of the diocese; who is himself obliged to follow the instructions of the pope. But what will happen if the majority of a parish association, in agreement with its priest, decides to go its own way and refuses obedience to the bishop?

There will be over the whole country, even in the smallest parishes, quarrels of all kinds about the enforcement of the law; for it is not possible to change totally an organization as old as France itself without causing great trouble. Will not a great many voters conclude that things were better before?

The essential claim of the French people is, that the priests must not interfere in politics and must confine themselves to their holy service. Now, after the separation, the priesthood, being released from any bond toward the state, and governed by bishops depending on the pope only, will be more clerical than ever and take part, still more than before, in electioneering intrigues and political struggles. The partisans of the separation think that the priests, being bereft of the influence which procures them their official appointment, will have much less authority. That is the question. The priesthood owes its power to the fact that the mass of the people cannot do without its services. After the separation the priests will be paid chiefly by rich people, that is, by the enemies of democratic reforms. Instead of diminishing the conflict between clericalism and anticlericalism, the separation of church and state will probably make it fiercer and more general. Will the influence of the public schools be strong enough to secure liberal democracy against renewed assaults? Thoughtful men cannot be otherwise than anxious about this problem; they judge that it would have been wiser to put off such a reform to later times, and to be content for the moment with diminishing the power of the monastic congregations.

Also for the Protestants² the separation will be a source of trouble. Many little congregations will, at least for a time, be unable to provide for their maintenance. But though it will occasion much individual suffering among the ministers, the majority of the Protes-

² There are about 650,000 Protestants in France, against 37,500,000 Catholics. But their influence is much greater than that of the Catholics in proportion to their number.

tants do not fear the separation. What they fear is that the state, being obliged to shield itself against a power so enormous as that of the centralized Roman church, may have recourse to oppressive measures, which would be applied also to the Protestants, as it does not seem possible to confer on them any special privilege. They know also, how sudden and how passionate are the changes of universal suffrage in this country, and they are afraid that, if a clerical reaction occurs, they may be its first victims. So they are obliged to make common cause with anticlericalism, even when the anticlericals assume an antireligious spirit which is repugnant to them, because the greatest danger for them is the clerical power, which suppresses Protestantism wherever it has the ability to do so.

Protestants, however, hope that the separation, by emphasizing and making manifest the clerical type of the French Catholic church, will induce a greater number of their liberal countrymen to come over to Protestant congregations. And it may be so, if the Protestants themselves become more free from a dogmatic faith, leave off quarrelling about theological symbols, and devote themselves boldly to moral and social teaching and to living according to the gospel. The French people do not like sectarian organizations. If the national Reformed Presbyterian church divides itself into a lot of little congregations, it will lose all influence in France. The Protestants ought to understand that those men who are free-minded enough to leave the church of their forefathers, and also religious enough to feel a repugnance to simple free thought, do not throw off the clerical yoke to bear the dogmatic one of a little congregation.

Some persons hope that after the separation a liberal Catholic church, separated from Rome, will arise. Among the priesthood there are perhaps some distinguished men who would not dislike such a reform. But it is very doubtful whether they would find many followers among the people. They would be a staff without soldiers. The Catholics who are free-minded enough to leave their church will not stay in a liberal Catholic church. They will go straight on to free thought.

From all these considerations it appears that the weak part of anticlericalism in France is its religious insufficiency; it degenerates too easily into opposition to any religion. And even this is a result

of clerical education, which teaches constantly that there is no real religion but in Roman Catholicism. When the pupils of such an education give up their Catholic faith, they do not doubt that they have no longer any religion at all. But history teaches us that the only way to destroy a religion is to substitute another one. So we may observe that the mightiest agent of the present anticlericalism in France is the socialistic one, professing a humanitarian ideal which is much like a religion of humanity, that is, a religion practicing the second part of the golden rule, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," but rejecting the first, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart."